

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1101
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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, U.K. (N.I.)

SUBJECT: CRAIG LOSES SUPPORT AS M.P. ROBERT BRADFORD RESIGNS
FROM VANGUARD

1. REV. ROBERT BRADFORD M.P. FOR SOUTH BELFAST ANNOUNCED
RESIGNATION FROM VANGUARD PARTY NOVEMBER 19 AND INTENTION TO
JOIN OFFICIAL UNIONIST PARTY. BRADFORD GAVE AS REASONS HIS
SUPPORT AT FIRST FOR CRAIG THEN RECONSIDERATION THREE PROMISES
HE HAD MADE TO ELECTORATE: (A) UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COALITION
(UUUC) CONVENTION MEMBERS WOULD DISCUSS FULLY WITH ALL
ELECTED MEMBERS CONVENTION. THEREFORE DECISION TO DISCONTINUE
TALKS WITH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY (SDLP) ON
SEPTEMBER 8 WAS WRONG (B) SECOND PROMISE WAS THAT BRADFORD
WOULD NOT HAVE SDLP IN GOVERNMENT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.
BRADFORD SAID HE HAS NO MANDATE FROM ELECTORATE EVEN FOR
VOLUNTARY COALITION GOVERNMENT (C) BRADFORD HAD COMMITTED HIMSELF
TO MAINTAINING UNITY OF ALL TRADITIONAL UNIONISTS. WHILE UNITY
LOOKED REMOTE RECENTLY, HE SAID, RECENT INFORMATION RELATING
TO NATURE OF DEVOLUTION FOR SCOTLAND WALES COULD HELP THREE PARTY
LEADERS REGAIN UNIONIST UNITY. BRADFORD CONTINUED WITH HIS
BELIEF MOST LIKELY OUTCOME OF CONSTITUTIONAL UNCERTAINTY WILL BE
THAT NORTHERN IRELAND WILL SHARE PROPOSED PLANS FOR DEVOLUTION
IN THE WHOLE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. BRADFORD DECISION PERHAPS
BALANCED SOMEWHAT WITH RECENT STATEMENT PADDY DEVLIN (SDLP)
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THAT TEN OFFICIAL UNIONISTS WERE PREPARED TO SUPPORT IDEA OF

VOLUNTARY COALITION IN "PHASE TWO" OF CONVENTION.

2. IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS: LOCAL PRESS HIGHLIGHTED EXCHANGE IN COMMONS NOV. 19 BETWEEN OPPOSITION LEADER MARGARET THACHER AND GOVERNMENT SPOKESMEN IN WHICH MRS. THATCHER EXPRESSED DISMAY THAT GOVERNMENT DECISION ON ULSTER CONVENTION REPORT WOULD NOT BE GIVEN UNTIL YEAR YEAR. PRESS ALSO NOTED ELECTION ENOCH POWELL M.P. FOR SOUTH DOWN AS DEPUTY LEADER UUUC AT WESTMINSTER TO REPLACE SUSPENDED WILLIAM CRAIG. POWELL SHARES STATUS WITH IAN PAISLEY AS DEPUTY LEADERS TO JAMES MOLYNEAUX. TEN MORE DETAINEES RELEASED YESTERDAY LEAVING 103 IN DETENTION. SOME OF THOSE REMAINING WILL NOT RPT NOT BE RELEASED BY CHRISTMAS SINCE THEY HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF CRIMES SUBSEQUENT TO BEING DETAINED.

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